



Department of Justice

**United States Attorney Joseph H. Hogsett
Southern District of Indiana**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 8, 2012

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CONTACT: TIM HORTY

(317) 229-2409

tim.horty@usdoj.gov

BLOOMINGTON MAN INDICTED ON FEDERAL GUN CHARGES, FACES UP TO TEN YEARS IN PRISON

Latest local results in ongoing U.S. Attorney's Violent Crime Initiative

PRESS RELEASE

BLOOMINGTON – Josh Minkler, First Assistant U.S. Attorney, announced today the federal indictment of Bloomington resident Andre Wells, age 23, on charges that he illegally possessed a firearm as a convicted felon.

“Over the last 18 months, the U.S. Attorney’s Office has focused on working closely with our law enforcement partners here in Monroe County and across the state,” Minkler said. “Today’s indictment is yet another prosecution to develop as a result of this important federal-local collaboration.”

On December 1, 2011, Andre Wells was allegedly found by local law enforcement to be in possession of a Hi-Point .45 caliber handgun. Wells’ prior felonies include an August 2009 charge of theft and an August 2011 charge of theft, both of which were in Monroe County. This indictment follows a joint investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and the Bloomington Police Department’s Special Investigations Unit.

Announced in March of 2011, the Violent Crime Initiative (VCI) represents a district-wide strategy to work with local law enforcement and county prosecutors to combat drug traffickers and criminals that use and carry firearms in their illegal activities. In the first nine months of the initiative, the VCI produced a dramatic increase in the number of gun-related charges brought federally – from just 14 felony possession charges in 2010 to 103 last year. Already in 2012, 21 felon in possession charges have been filed as part of the VCI, putting the office on pace to exceed last year’s total.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney Barry D. Glickman, who is prosecuting the case for the United States, Wells faces a possible penalty of up to 10 years imprisonment, a fine of up to

\$250,000, and up to three years of supervised release upon release from imprisonment if he is convicted. An initial hearing will be scheduled before a U.S. Magistrate Judge in Indianapolis.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. A defendant is presumed innocent and is entitled to a fair trial at which the government must prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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